



Multidimensionale Risks in the XXI Century

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Lay – expert risk perception divide: downscaling macro problems to national concerns

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This presentation seeks to identify the gaps in lay-expert risk perceptions of major risk types in Lithuania and to compare local perceptions to those of global experts. Slovic (1987, 2010) has drawn attention to the multidimensionality of risk, when public risk perception are driven by complex considerations, that could be missing from expert risk assessments. Empirical research on lay-expert risk perception has identified that for some risks public tend to overestimate (e.g. nuclear power), and for others – underestimate (e.g. driving a car). The “dichotomy of risk” in our presentation is tested using the list of 30 risks representing 5 major risk areas: social, environmental, economic, technological and geopolitical. The list is based on risk classification provided by World economic forum in *Global risk report*. The adequate national indicators were selected for each risk issue, identified by Global risk report.

Data analysis for this presentation is based on the representative public opinion survey, conducted in Lithuania during September – October, 2020 (with 2000 respondents) and municipality experts online survey (from 55 municipalities out of 60) in Lithuania. Both surveys used the same list of risks and threats, and respondents were asked to rate them. We will (1) analyze and identify the similarities and discrepancies in lay-expert risk perception in Lithuania; (2) compare public and expert risk perceptions about dominant risk in Lithuania to those identified as globally critical issues by World economic forum risk report. Understanding the lay-expert risk perception gaps allows to propose targeted communication strategies, raising public awareness. Another implication of our study is to test to what extent global risk issues are relevant in local contexts.

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